IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 10.

Please add claims 20 and 21.

Please amend the claims to read as indicated herein.

1. (Currently amended) A connecting device ~~adapted~~ for providing an optical connection between an apparatus ~~comprising~~having a plurality of ~~apparatus~~ ports for receiving and/or sending optical signals, and ~~at least one optical fiber being coupled to~~ a connector, the connecting device ~~comprises~~comprising:

a support plate supporting ~~at least two~~a plurality of adapters, wherein each of said plurality of adapters ~~comprises~~includes an adapter contact ~~adapted~~ for providing a connection with one of ~~the~~said plurality of ~~apparatus~~ ports, and a connector contact ~~adapted~~ for providing a connection with ~~the~~said connector; and

a locking device for maintaining a fixed position between said plurality of adapters and said plurality of ports, wherein said support plate includes a member that interfaces with said locking device to activate said locking device.

2. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~said support plate provides a grip for substantially concurrently contacting all of ~~its~~said plurality of adapters with ~~the~~ respective ~~apparatus~~ ports of said plurality of ports to be contacted.

3. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~said adapter contacts and ~~theapparatus~~said plurality of ports ~~are adapted for providing~~provide a plug connection.

4. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~said connector contacts and ~~the~~said connectors ~~are adapted for providing~~provide a connection selected from the group consisting of: a plug connection~~and/or~~, a screw connection, and a combination thereof.

5. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein:
~~the~~said support plate supports ~~at least two~~said plurality of adapters, and
all of said plurality of adapters of ~~the~~said support plate are arranged in a straight line.

6. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ further comprising a grip provided by two opposing end portions of ~~the~~said support plate ~~provide the grip~~.

7. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim ~~1~~6, wherein ~~the~~said end portions and ~~the~~said at least two adapters are arranged in a straight line.

8. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein:
~~the~~said adapter contacts of ~~at least two~~said plurality of adapters are adapted for ~~the~~a port type selected from the group consisting of: the same ~~apparatus~~ port type, ~~and/or the adapter contacts of at least two adapters are adapted for~~ different ~~apparatus~~ port types, and~~/or~~ a combination thereof, and
~~the~~said connector contacts of ~~at least two~~said plurality of adapters are adapted for a connector type selected from the group consisting of: the same connector type, ~~and/or the connector contacts of at least two adapters are adapted for~~ different connector types, and a combination thereof.

9. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein at least one adapter of said plurality of adapters is adapted for a connector and port selected from the group consisting of: a single-mode connector and ~~apparatus~~ port,

~~and/or at least one adapter is adapted for~~ a multi-mode connector and ~~apparatus~~ port, and a combination thereof.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein:

at least one of ~~the~~said plurality of adapters is provided with ~~such a~~said locking device, and

~~the~~said support plate ~~is provided for~~ simultaneously ~~adjusting the~~activates each said locking device~~s of all of its adapters between a locking state and a releasing state~~.

12. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein:

~~each~~said locking device ~~comprises~~includes at least one catching member mounted ~~at the~~on one of said plurality of adapters and movable between a locking position and a release position,

~~in the locking position the~~said catching member embraces a pin of ~~the~~said ~~apparatus~~ port when in said locking position, and

~~in the release position the~~said catching member releases ~~the~~said pin when in said release position.

13. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 12, wherein ~~the~~said locking device ~~comprises a release and/or locking mechanism adapted for providing~~is activated by said member of said support plate to move said catching member from ~~the~~said release position ~~and/or the~~ to said locking position, and wherein said locking device is de-activated by said member of said support plate to move said catching member from said locking position to said release position ~~by activating the release and/or locking mechanism, and/or the locking device is adapted for providing the release position and/or the locking position passively by plugging the connecting device or by pulling the connecting device, respectively~~.

14. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~at least one of said plurality of adapters ~~is provided for receiving~~ receives at least one bare fiber.

15. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein said connector is coupled to an optical fiber, ~~the~~and wherein said support plate ~~is provided with~~includes a receptacle ~~adapted~~ for mounting a cable channel ~~receiving, protecting and guiding~~that receives, protects and guides ~~the fibers~~said optical fiber of ~~each~~said connecting device.

16. (Currently amended) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein:

each adapter of said plurality of adapters is movably mounted on said support plate relative to ~~the~~said support plate and parallel to ~~the~~a plugging direction ~~movably mounted at the support plate~~,

~~the~~said ~~support plate comprises~~member is at least one actuating member co-operating with at least one catching member of ~~the~~said adapter,

a plug in movement of ~~the~~said support plate pushes ~~the~~said at least one actuating member ~~for urging the~~ to urge said respective at least one catching member into ~~its~~a locking position, and

a plug off movement of ~~the~~said support plate pulls ~~the~~said at least one actuating member ~~for releasing~~to release ~~the~~said at least one respective catching member into ~~its~~a release position.

17. (Currently amended) A system~~, in particular a signal processing system,~~ comprising:

at least one apparatus ~~comprising~~having a plurality of ~~apparatus~~ ports for receiving and/or sending optical signals~~,~~;

a plurality of ~~optical fibers each being coupled to a~~ connectors~~,~~;

at least one connecting device ~~adapted for~~ providing optical connections between at least two of said plurality of ~~apparatus~~ ports and at least two of said plurality of connectors, wherein ~~the~~said connecting device ~~comprises~~includes

a support plate supporting ~~at least two~~a plurality of adapters, and wherein each of said plurality of adapters ~~comprises~~includes an adapter contact ~~adapted~~ for providing a connection with one of ~~the~~said plurality of ~~apparatus~~ ports, and a connector contact ~~adapted~~ for providing a connection with one of said plurality of connectors; and

a locking device for maintaining a fixed position between said plurality of adapters and said plurality of ports, wherein said support plate includes a member that interfaces with said locking device to activate said locking device.

18. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 17, wherein all of said plurality of ~~apparatus~~ ports assigned to the same connecting device are arranged in a straight line.

19. (Currently amended) A system for mounting a connecting device, wherein said connecting device ~~adapted for providing~~provides an optical connection between an apparatus ~~comprising~~having a plurality of ~~apparatus~~ ports for receiving and/or sending optical signals, and ~~at least one optical fiber being coupled to~~ a connector, wherein ~~the~~said connecting device ~~comprises~~includes a support plate supporting ~~at least two~~a plurality of adapters, wherein each adapter ~~comprises~~includes an adapter contact ~~adapted~~ for providing a connection with one of ~~the~~said plurality of ~~apparatus~~ ports and a connector contact ~~adapted~~ for providing a connection with ~~the~~said connector, wherein said connecting device includes a locking device for maintaining a fixed position between said plurality of adapters and said plurality of ports, and wherein said support plate includes a member that interfaces with said locking device to activate said locking device, said system comprising components selected from the group consisting of:

at least two types of support plates selected from the group consisting of: support plates adapted for different types of adapters, ~~and/or~~support plates adapted for different numbers of adapters, and~~/or~~ a combination thereof,

at least two types of adapters selected from the group consisting of: adapters adapted for different connectors, ~~and/or~~adapters adapted for different ~~apparatus~~ ports, and a combination thereof, and

a combination thereof.

20. (New) The connecting device according to claim 12, wherein said locking device is passively activated to said locking position by plugging-in said connecting device, and wherein said locking device is passively de-activated to said release position by pulling said connecting device.

21. (New) The connecting device according to claim 1, wherein said member also interfaces with said locking device to de-activate said locking device.